



THE NEW JERSEY ITALIAN AND ITALIAN AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION



Opening Night for "Italians of New Jersey"

On September 26, 2005 the New Jersey Italian American Heritage Foundation will be hosting the Opening Night of the newly produced film, *"The Italian Americans of New Jersey: A Legacy of Achievement"*. The opening night of this new documentary, to be held at La Villa in Mountain Lakes, will be a gala-style event, featuring prominent Italian American citizens of New Jersey. The movie will be released on NJN to 14 million viewers in the Tri-State area on Columbus Day and will be sold on DVDs

later in the year. The film is intended to counteract the negative media images of Italian Americans in New Jersey by highlighting the achievements, contributions and public service of today's NJ Italian Americans.

The Opening Night event will honor **Dr. John Petillo**, President of UMDNJ, who served as former CEO of Blue Cross/Blue Shield and the Chancellor of Seton Hall University.

Contact the Commission's offices for information on ticket sales and sponsorship of the film.



President of UMDNJ, Dr. J. Petillo

Preparing 2nd NJ Italian American Congress

The NJ Italian Commission's Community Advisory Council, which works closely with the Community Outreach Relations Committee, convened at Rutgers University on July 21st to outline the 2nd New Jersey Congress of Italian Americans. This second statewide convention for Italian American organizations, educators and the general public will again be held in New Brunswick on October

29th. Chairpersons Dr. Eileen Poiani and Mr. Frank Gargione, and Commissioner Richard Bilotti approved the 2nd convention's program, based on the 2004 Resolution passed at the 1st Congress. Over 500 people attended the first event, including leaders of over 75 organizations. The continuing purpose of these conventions is to strengthen unity by networking and planning statewide community projects.

Agenda for October 29, 2005 *"NJ Italians—Serving Each Other"*

Exhibition Hall Breakfast

General Assembly

- Review of 2004 Congress
- Programs and Projects
- Presentation on Unity and Service

Working Sessions

- Italian Educational Programs
- Italian Organization Collaboration
- Italian American Business Networking
- Promoting Positive Italian Images
- Promotion of the Italian Language
- Building the NJ Scuola Italiana
- Italian American Political Caucus

Lunch and Closing Ceremonies

Sicily Strengthens Ties with New Jersey



Mr. Buddy Fortunato (left) and US Rep. Bill Pascrell (center) honoring Mayor Scapagnini of Catania, Sicily (right).

On July 8th, the Mayor of Catania, Dr. Umberto Scapagnini, was honored at a ceremony in West Orange, presided over by Representative Bill Pascrell and Senator Joseph Doria. The event was organized by Buddy Fortunato, owner of the Italian Tribune, and featured a number of government officials from Sicily, the Republic of Italy and representatives of the Italian

American community of New Jersey. Commission Chairman Larry Paragano was present to meet with the Mayor, Consul General Bandini and Vice Consul Paolo Toschi. This ceremony marked the fourth NJ State meeting with delegations from Sicily, whose government has expressed great interest in commercial, cultural and educational exchanges with the State of New Jersey.



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Chairman's Message

The Fall is extremely symbolic for New Jersey's Italian American community, as many events celebrating Italian Heritage take place. Beginning in September, events such as the Mercer County Italian Festival draw huge crowds, and other Italian festivals throughout the State bring out the local community to celebrate Italian Heritage. In October, many communities celebrate Columbus Day with events and parades, all in the state with the most statues dedicated to Columbus.

The Commission is helping to bring focus to October as Italian Heritage Month by hosting the 2nd NJ Italian Congress and supporting the Opening Night of the new film "The Italians of New Jersey".



Commission Chairman Larry Paragano

I urge all of New Jersey's Italian Americans to participate in the Congress and to come and view the new movie.

Remembering our Heritage through participation is critical to preserving it. Many of our family traditions, our values and the keys to our success can be attributed to our Heritage. Let us remember and celebrate our traditions during this Fall season.

Commission Upcoming Events

- **September 26, 2005**
Opening Night for New Film
Viewing and Fund-Raiser for the new film "Italians of New Jersey" by the NJ Italian American Foundation
- **October 1, 2005**
Phase II Curriculum Pilot
Launching for K-12 Grades
New Pilot districts receiving test curriculum models
- **October 29, 2005**
2nd New Jersey Italian American Congress
Convention at Rutgers University in New Brunswick
- **January 2006**
5th Italian American Leadership Convocation
Commission will host its 5th Convocation in Northern Jersey for 2006

Italian Art Showcased at Zimmerli Museum

The New Jersey Italian American Heritage Foundation and The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University held an exclusive evening event entitled *Italian Art Through the Ages*. The gathering, in honor of the celebration of the *Festa della Repubblica* (Founding of the Italian Republic), showcased the programs of the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission, which are financially supported by the Foundation.

The fund-raising cocktail reception was hosted at one of the largest university museums in the country – Rutgers University's Zimmerli Art Museum. The short program featured introductions to Rutgers University's Italian, Italian

Studies and Italian Art History Departments and included a presentation on a special Baroque painting exhibition from Naples (featuring renown 17th century artists, such as Caravaggio, Gentileschi, and Ribera), planned for 2007 here in New Jersey.

The evening concluded with a private tour of the Museum's Italian and Italian American collections. While not organized into an Italian art gallery, the Zimmerli boasts about 25 paintings and sculptures of Italian, Italian American or Italian French origin. Noted collections include a series of Roman and Etruscan artifacts, a group of Renaissance and Baroque oil paintings and a number of 20th



Zimmerli Museum at Rutgers University

century, modern Italian American paintings. Some of the featured artists included: Merdardo Rosso, Carlo Ciampaglia, Sal Sirugo, Peter Busa, Massimo Stanzione, Andrea del Sarto, Georges Bottini, Giovanni Battista Salvi, and Girolamo DiBenvenuto. The Commission hopes that NJ's teachers will expose students to these artists through field trips to New Brunswick, to see one of the largest university museums.



NJ Italian Unity Growing

In an on-going effort to build unity and common cause among the approximately 400 Italian American organizations in New Jersey, the Commission is observing the Italian community's growing interest in the strengthening of regional Italian organization networking groups. Once popular in first half of the 20th century, these "organizations of organizations" served to bring together the leadership of a series of local Italian American organization, in order to better communicate, plan and share ideas. Often, these inter-group gatherings assembled under umbrella titles, like "federation", "congress" or "united". But during the latter part of the 20th century, as the Italian American generations changed, these groups diminished in favor of highly localized organizations, or interlocked national organizations.



Dr. Joseph Seneca
New Commissioner



Dr. George Pruitt
New Commissioner

Commission Appointments

The Commission would like to welcome four newly appointed members to the Commission. **Dr. Joseph Seneca**, former Executive Vice President of Rutgers University and a long-standing Advisor to the Commission, fills a vacancy, while **Dr. George Pruitt**,

With the acceleration of the "Risorgimento" movement in NJ, these efforts are again gathering strength, as forward-thinking Italian American leaders are seeing the benefits of working in concert.

One such effort underway is the resurgence of the **Federation of Italian American Societies of New Jersey**. President Pasquale Meola and officer Susan LaMorte are part of the team of officers there that organized an event in April to revitalize this networking tradition. The Federation seeks not to compete, absorb or overshadow its neighboring Italian American organizations, but rather to provide a setting where members of different groups can interact, plan and exchange information.

The Commission strongly endorses efforts like the one undertaken by the Federation, which will help strengthen and organize our Italian community.

Dr. Nancy Carnevale
New Commissioner



Mr. Domenico Tancredi
New Commissioner

President of Thomas Edison State College, joins *ex officio*.

Dr. Nancy Carnevale, a professor of Italian at Montclair University, fills an academic vacancy, while **Mr. Domenico Tancredi**, teacher of Italian and former President of the Italian Teachers Association of New Jersey, joins the Commission as a new member. Commissioners are appointed by the NJ Governor, Assembly or Senate for 3 years.

CAVOUR'S COLUMN

This Fall will prove to be an important milestone in the ongoing progress of the Italian Risorgimento underway in New Jersey. In addition to the many Columbus Day celebrations planned around the State of New Jersey in October, two additional major events will take place. On October 29, 2005, the 2nd New Jersey Congress of Italian American Organizations will come together at Rutgers University. Since the first one, the Commission has witnessed a growth of interest by Italian American organizations to work together to plan major activities.



By A. Roger Marinzoli

Executive Director
of the New Jersey
Italian and Italian
American Heritage
Commission

This Column is named after Cavour, founder of "Il Risorgimento", the 1847 Italian Newspaper, which promoted Italian unity, heritage and identity.

The second major event is the Opening Night of the film "The Italians of New Jersey", which will take place on September 26th, followed by a Tri-State area broadcast to 14 million viewers on Columbus Day. Focused on the success of New Jersey's Italian Americans, this film is a must-see for anyone interested in Italian heritage.

The Commission invites you to participate in both of these major undertakings this year. Please contact the Commission offices to register for the October 29th Congress and to purchase tickets for the September 26th Opening Night Event.



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Amicizia Program Launched



Dr. Roror, Mayor and Staff of Margherita Di Savoia endorsing Amicizia Program

The Commission launched a new educational initiative that supports educational exchanges between New Jersey and Italian students. Known as the “*Amicizia Program*” (Friendship Program), this initiative currently involves the exchange of letters and emails between interested New Jersey schools and participating Italian schools. The Commission assists in the coordination of participating teachers and initiating the correspondence process.

On May 27, 2005, the sixth-grade classes of Ms. Gloria Roth at the Crockett Middle School in the Pilot District of Hamilton Township became the 1st NJ school involved. In support of this, Hamilton Mayor Gilmore issued a Declaration of Friendship to the Mayor of Naro, Italy.

In June 2005, Dr. Roror Baldassari traveled to Margherita Di Savoia, a sea-side town in the Province of Foggia to meet with its Mayor, Ingegnere Salvatore Camporeale, to gather schools eager to participate in the project.

Thus far, a number of schools in Sicily and Lombardia are involved. More information will be available on the *Amicizia Program*, as it expands in the fall to include other regions of Italy, from the Mezzogiorno to Rome.

The New Jersey Institute of Italian and Italian American Heritage Studies, located at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, is the operational body of the New Jersey Italian and Italian American Heritage Commission for program implementation and administration. The Commission, located in, but not of, the New Jersey Department of Education, was created pursuant to the enactment of P.L. 2001, Chapter 343 C.18A4-42 and signed into law on in January 2002. The Institute, a 501.c.3. entity with statewide jurisdiction, is charged with providing services to the public at large, as well as public, non-profit and other public service institutions in all twenty-one counties in New Jersey

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